vox saxophonalis

soprano saxophone - Jean-François Picard
alto saxophone - Laurel Sadownik
tenor saxophone - Karen Porkka
baritone saxophone - Jessica Keyes

Sunday, May 25, 2003
8:00pm

Convocation Hall
University of Alberta

Admission - *Free*

PROGRAM*

La Tempesta di Mare — Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741), *arr.Pierre Borango*

I: Allegro
II: Largo
III: Presto

Quator pour Saxophones (1955) — Pierre Max Dubois (1930-1995)

I: Brillante
II: Doloroso
III: Sprituoso
IV: Andante-Presto

Rialto Ripples Rag (1917) — George Gershwin (1898-1937), *tr. Gerry Nowak*

INTERMISSION

Quartet #1 in Three Movements (1995) — Bob Mintzer (b.1953)

I: Allegretto
II Slowly
III: Allegro

Historie du Tango (1986) *pour Quatour de Saxophones* (1991) — Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992), *tr. Claude Voirpy*

I: Bordel 1900
II: Cafe 1930
III: Night Club 1960

* Please do not applaud between movements.

PROGRAM NOTES

Italian Baroque Composer, **Antonio Vivaldi**, known for his contribution in the development of the concerto, is also responsible for writing numerous works for woodwinds, which were not common in Venice at the time. Vivaldi's music remained inactive for centuries until some major manucript discoveries were made in the 20th Century which led to an explosion of performances and recordings. *La Tempesta di Mare* (The Tempest of the Sea), composed in Vivaldi's later years, is a collection of concertos for flute or woodwinds. The chamber music arrangement was originally for flute, oboe, violin, bassoon, and basso continuo. The transcription is well suited for saxophone quartet. Much like *The Four Seasons*, *La Tempesta di Mare*, explores Vivaldi's programmatic and dramatic stlye. This work is modelled after Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest* (1617). Each movement invokes different images from the play. The first movement portrays the imaginary storm, the Tempest, while the second movement symbolizes the interrupted love between Miranda and Sebastian. The third movement has fanfare qualities which illustrate the royal banquet scene at the end of the play.

French composer, **Pierre Max Dubois** composed over 50 works for saxophone, which includes a large body of works for the wind repertoire. Dubois studied with Milhaud and Rivier and was greatly influenced by the music of Prokofiev. He taught at the Paris Conservatoire and consistently composed in the traditional French Neo-Classical style.
The *Quator pour Saxophones* is one of the most popular works for the saxophone quartet. It possesses light and humerous qualities, as well as drama, and vigour.

Born in Brooklyn, **George Gerswin** began his career playing the piano by ear. At the age of 13, he became a "song plugger" in Tin Pan Alley. By the 1920's Gershwin had produced hundreds of songs, musicals, including his famous *Rhapsody in Blue.* The *Rialto Ripples Rag* was composed in conjuction with Will Donalson when Gershwin was in his teens. Origianally written for solo piano, it is the only known rag by Gershwin.

American saxophonist, **Bob Mintzer**, is a performer, composer, arranger and educator. He is open minded to all genres, including, pop, jazz, latin, orchestral, and world. He has played with many jazz greats. Mintzer formed his own Big Band in 1984, and he continues to write arrangements for Big Band, as well as saxophone methods, and solos. The *Quartet #1 in Three Movements* is one of two saxophone quartets by Mintzer. It incorporates many different styles and genres, and goes beyond the parameters of "jazz."

Astor Piazzolla is an Italian born in Argentina. When he was four, the family moved to New York where he was exposed to Duke Ellington and jazz at the Cotton Club. Piazzolla began playing the bandoneon (button accordian) at age nine after hearing nostalgic tangos his father used play on the gramaphone. In 1937, the family went back to Argentina, and Astor moved to Buenos Aries, where he formed a tango band. In the 50's he went to Europe and studied classical composition with Nadia Boulanger, where he formulated a new tango style. The fusion of traditional tango, with the harmonies of classical and jazz music became Piazzolla's trademark in his modern "tango nuevo" style. *Historie du Tango* was originally composed for flute and guitar, and was later arranged for saxophone quartet. Piazzolla reflects on the different ages of tango. Piazzolla offers program notes in the score:
"Bordello, 1900: The tango originated in Buenos Aries in 1882...This music is filled with grace and liveliness. It paints a picture of good natured chatter of the French, italian, and Spanish women who peopled these Bordellos as they eased policemen, theives, sailors, and riffraff..."
"Continental Cafe 1930: ...People stopped dancing as they did in 1900, preferring to listen...It became more musical, and more romantic...The movements are slower..."
"Night Club 1960: ...the tango evolves again as Brazil and Argentina come together in Buenos Aries. The bossa nova and the new tango move to the same beat...Audiences rush to night clubs to listen earnestly to the new tango..."

- Notes by Laurel Sadownik